

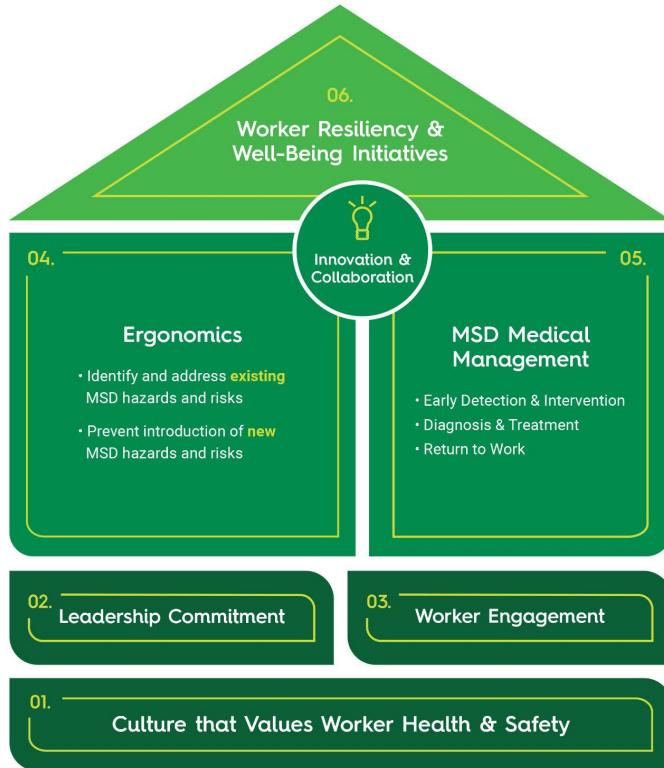


Policy & Procedure Checklist

MSD SOLUTIONS

Building an MSD Solutions Program

nsc.org/preventworkplaceinjuries



Building Your MSD Solutions Policies

A comprehensive MSD Solutions Program requires the collaboration of many diverse stakeholders, including safety, operations, workers, occupational healthcare providers and human resources.

Although there are some regions with health and safety regulations that address MSDs, a comprehensive MSD Solutions Program will require organizations to go beyond compliance to build a program that includes the following:

- **A Culture that Values Worker Health & Safety**
- **MSD Risk Identification and Elimination**
- **MSD Medical Management Procedures**
- **Strategies to Support Worker Resiliency & Well-Being**

Policy to Progress

Your safety team can use this checklist to create a policy that's right for your company or evaluate written policies already in place. Not all companies will be able to fulfill every recommendation, and your company may need to consider a paced strategy to add to your policy over time.

Establish regular time periods to review and update your company's safety policies. Then, consider how your company can add additional elements each year to progress your policies through a **ladder of maturity**:

UNAWARE

MSD prevention is not a priority.
May not be aware that MSDs are an issue, or may not know what to do.

REACTIVE

We are responsive to injuries when they occur.

ADVANCING

We are building systems to manage MSD risks and hazards.

PROACTIVE

We anticipate and prevent MSDs before they occur; our workers feel comfortable speaking up.

INNOVATING

Safety is second nature for us. We are preoccupied with learning and invest in new innovations in the field of health and safety.

Culture that Values Worker Health and Safety

A company culture is defined by its mission and vision, leadership priorities and actions, operational policies and systems, and workforce participation. Consider how your MSD prevention policies align with broader company values for worker health and safety. Roles and responsibilities for health and safety are defined for all levels of the organization.

Leverage the following components in your company policy to support a culture of health and safety:

- Formally documented company vision for a safe and healthy workplace
- Health and safety goals, including MSD risk reduction goals, and time periods to review goal measurements
- Statement of accountability for all levels of management to health and safety objectives and initiatives, including those that support MSD risk reduction
- Commitment to an environment where employees feel comfortable speaking up to voice their opinions, and believe they will not be punished or humiliated for sharing their ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes
- Statement that health and safety programs and policies are designed to include and protect a fully diverse workforce, and are equally provided for and accessible to employees at all levels and in all positions in the company
- Documented systems that encourage reporting for employees to report near misses and work-related injuries & illnesses, hazards, risks and opportunities

MSD Risk Identification and Elimination

As you construct your policies to support ergonomic solutions, consider how your company is identifying sources of MSD Risk and systematically eliminating the risk. Is your company applying the **hierarchy of controls**, eliminating MSD risks at the source whenever possible?

Engaging your workers in identifying, prioritizing and eliminating MSD risk is paramount and will lead you to the most effective solutions.

Explore the following elements of your MSD Solutions Program which focus on MSD risk identification and mitigation:

- Processes and risk assessment tools for identifying MSD risk factors in the workplace
- Processes for prioritizing the identified risks for resolution
- Process for developing and implementing solutions for the identified risks following the hierarchy of controls
- Preferred workplace ergonomics analysis tools and guidelines
- Process for securing funding for ergonomic solutions
- Ergonomics Design Guidelines which provide minimum facility and task design specifications to prevent MSDs
- Management of Change (MOC) Process that ensures safety and ergonomics are assessed during operational changes
- Purchasing guidelines for equipment and materials
- Office ergonomics: Guidelines for setting up new office work spaces, conducting periodic office workstation evaluations and providing proper office equipment and accessories
- Standards that govern shift lengths, consecutive days worked and the frequency and length of breaks
- Ergonomics Training Programs: Provide appropriate ergonomics training and education for safety personnel, engineers, workers, supervisors, managers and purchasing staff

MSD Medical Management Procedures

The goal of an MSD medical management program is to prevent pain, impairment and disability, as well as ensure the safe return to the workplace of all workers who experience an MSD. An effective MSD medical management program requires collaboration between your organization, the employee, and the health care provider(s) (HCPs).

Early detection and intervention for MSDs helps workers recover more effectively and return to work sooner.

Consider how you can enhance and promote supportive protocols by adding the following items to your workplace policies:

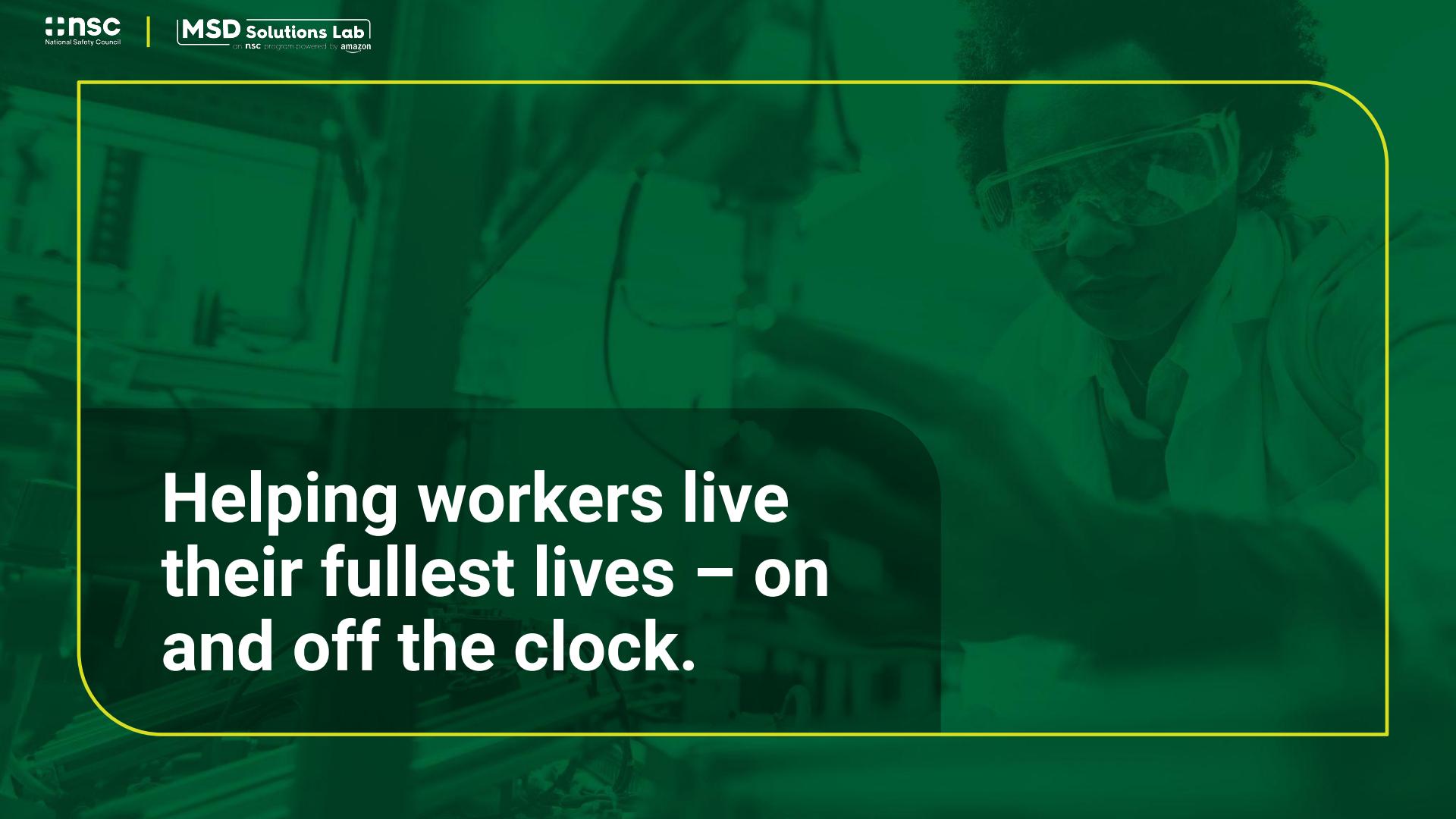
- Procedures for reporting MSD signs, symptoms and injuries
- Systems to actively encourage early reporting of signs and symptoms of MSDs
- Identification of healthcare providers (HCPs) with occupational and MSD treatment experience
- Protocols for collaboration and communication between employer and HCP to ensure proper diagnosis, treatment and optimal return to work of injured employees
- Process to identify and mitigate work-related risk factors following reports of MSDs or MSD signs and symptoms by employees.
- Description of protocols to determine modified job duties following injury, which may include protocols for HCPs to come onsite, conduct job assessments and make recommendations before an employee returns to work
- Description of flexible working arrangements for injured employees in rehabilitation
- Paid sick leave policies for recovery from MSD injuries
- Description of rights and protections for workers with disabilities and pre-existing conditions or limitations

Benefits and Programs to Support Worker Resiliency and Well-Being

Workplaces that promote worker well-being increase worker health, resiliency, and engagement. To round out your company's safety and MSD prevention initiatives, consider company benefits, programs and policies that support worker well-being, health and mental health needs.

You might pursue ideas from the following list of recommended benefits, policies and programs:

- Comprehensive healthcare coverage
- Subsidized gym memberships
- Inclusion of mental health services
- Onsite fitness equipment
- Paid sick leave
- Onsite fitness classes
- Paid family leave
- Company fitness challenges
- Mental health days off
- Subsidized healthy meal options
- Sick leave/PTO pooling programs
- Nutritious snack options on site
- Flexible work schedules
- Nutrition seminar/classes
- Job acclimation programs when starting highly physical jobs
- Mindfulness / meditation breaks
- Work hardening programs when returning from an injury
- Break rooms designed for socialization
- Work readiness / warm-up programs
- Access to green spaces
- Flexibility and Stretching Programs
- Peer support groups
- Onsite massage therapy



A woman wearing safety glasses and a lab coat, working in a laboratory setting with glassware in the background.

**Helping workers live
their fullest lives – on
and off the clock.**